



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: November 5, 2021

Town Administrator

- Reviewed Holiday Lighting Plan with Recreation.
- Finalized and Approved Liability Insurance Plan.
- Reviewed upcoming Animal Control Contract Renewal with surrounding Towns.
- Met with residents regarding, road work, tree conditions, and development opportunities.
- Met with IT Committee regarding ongoing projects.
- Attended Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

- Accounting Office is concurrently working on the Tax Rate Recap and Schedule A Reporting.
- Currently working on EOY School Schedule 1 & 19 report.
- Attended MMAAA Annual Fall Conference. Agenda topics included ARPA update & Plymouth's Count Approach, State of the State; Mass Taxpayers Foundation, and COVID 19 Legal employment issues.
- Met with our MIIA Account Executive David Labonte, to review the FY22 MIIA policy.
- Met with Affordable Housing Trust to go over the accounting process of submitting bills to the Accounting Dept.

Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

Principal Assessor

1. Held Classification Hearing with the Select Board
2. Signed and submitted Recap to DOR.
3. Bill file pulled for 3rd & 4th Quarter with tax rate of 16.88
4. Board of Assessor meeting held 11/3, approved Personal Exemptions, Uncollectible Personal Property, signed to Chapter Liens.
5. Notified ATB cases that were for scheduled for December 9, 2021, have been notified and continued till March 10, 2022
6. Updated owners and values on MapGeo and online field cards.

Town Clerk

The Clerk's Office is beginning to transition over to new software from LL Data for vitals, dog licensing, business certificates and raffle permits. With the new system, we will have the ability to send email reminders to register dogs and to businesses to renew their licenses (provided we have an email address on file).

Initiative Petitions received have been certified and returned to date.

Kids voting ended on October 15th with 80 votes from our youth. The winning dog tag for 2022 is the blue shield. Thank you to all who participated!

Indexing of vital records is ongoing and we have started organizing our plans and map file with help from our long-term helper, Olie, with the Senior Work Off program. Skip Currier has been volunteering to scan maps and plans organized to start the digitizing process of our records.

Committee/board members are taking their oath of office as re-appointments or new members.

2021 Street Lists are available for purchase for \$10.00 a book. An electronic version is available for any departments who would like a copy.

We continue to assist many residents and individuals with vital requests, dog licensing, marriage licenses, business certificates, public records requests, notaries, and town related information.

We still have several board/committee members who have not completed the conflict-of-interest training and sign off.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

313 log entries were made including 46 - 911 calls, 22 alarm calls, 32 ambulance calls, 3 animal complaints, 128 business/area checks, 5 disturbance calls, 3 fraud/ID theft complaints, 6 motor vehicle accidents, 14 motor vehicle stops and 6 well-being checks.

4 License to Carry Firearms (LTC) applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on the resurgence of Unemployment Fraud Complaints and What Victims Can Do to Protect Themselves.

Extra patrols were deployed for Halloween to ensure the safety of trick-or-treaters, homeowners and motorists. Officers were posted at both ends of South Street and our two motorcycle units conducted high visibility neighborhood patrols throughout the town, stopping frequently to greet children and their escorts. We are happy to report that no incidents were reported during the evening.

Training included mandatory MPTC online in-service training for all officers including Human Trafficking, De-Escalation and Use of Force, Police Responding to Emergencies of Those with a Mental Illness, Cultural Competency, Suicide & QPR Certification, Critical Incident Stress Management and Mental Wellness. Officers also received legal updates on current court decisions and roll call notices including Commonwealth Fusion Center bulletins.

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

Department of Public Works (Including Engineering, Cemetery & Sewer)

Public Works: Starting November 13th, the Brush Dump is open Saturdays 9am-1pm only. The recycling drop off area is located to 64 Old Westboro and operates Saturdays 8:00am-1:00pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00am-2:00pm. Seasonal paving continues on several streets in all areas of town. Main Street improvements project related utility (gas, electricity, communications) work will continue random days.

Highway Department: Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure and equipment. The staff continues street sweeping operations, drainage system repairs, grass mowing, and line painting. Staff continues temporary drainage improvements on George Hill Road. Staff continues annual mowing of town owned meadows on Adams Rd, George Hill Rd, and Merriam Rd.

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions in including leaf removal, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, and grounds maintenance. Provided support for two funerals. Asst. recreation dept with ongoing park improvements and seasonal programs.

Sewer Department: Routine operation and maintenance of the towns wastewater treatment and collection systems. Routine administrative functions including quarterly billing, collection issues, final billing, and resident questions and requests. Provided inspection services and reviews for new service connections and new subdivisions. Staff conducted CCTV inspections of several areas of the collection system looking for leaks and other defects for greater system reliability.

Engineering

No Report Submitted

Health Department

As of November 4, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,469 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. The number of new cases continues to be elevated in Grafton, surrounding communities and the State. Individuals are strongly advised to continue to exercise precautions (e.g., wearing masks, social distancing, frequent hand washing), especially given the Delta variant circulating throughout the country and increased case counts.

Worcester County and surrounding areas are considered to be “high risk” areas for COVID transmission per the CDC’s classification methods. Given this elevated risk level, the CDC advises that all individuals wear face masks when indoors in public places (regardless of vaccination status). In addition, Massachusetts released a mask advisory that fully vaccinated individuals are advised to wear face masks when indoors (and not in your own home) if you have a weakened immune system, or if you are at increased risk because of your age or an underlying medical condition (or if someone in your household falls into those criteria).

The Worcester DPH nursing staff contacts any confirmed positive cases to review the protocols for proper isolation and quarantine with the cases and monitor each case per protocol. The nurses also contact any close contacts of each case regarding the appropriate protocols.

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccines and how to find a vaccination location, visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>. Vaccination is strongly recommended.

The FDA authorized and the CDC also recommended that children ages 5-11 years get vaccinated for COVID-19. Currently, the only vaccine authorized for children ages 5-11 years is the Pfizer vaccine. More details can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html> and <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccinations-for-children-ages-5-11>.

The FDA has authorized and the CDC also recommended that certain individuals are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine booster. More details on the eligible populations and timing can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>

In addition, the FDA authorized and the CDC also recommended that individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised receive an additional dose of mRNA vaccine COVID-19 vaccine after the initial 2 doses. More details can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>.

Flu shots are now available at pharmacies and other locations (e.g., doctor's office).

As a reminder, the mosquito and tick season is still upon us. Grafton has been notified of a total of 2 mosquitoes in Grafton that have tested positive for West Nile Virus. Please visit <https://www.grafton-ma.gov/home/news/press-release-west-nile-virus-found-mosquitoes> for more information and the expected spraying area.

- For mosquitoes, please remember the 5 D's. Dress in long sleeves and pants when possible, especially during periods of mosquito activity. DEET is an effective repellent. Dawn and Dusk are the most active periods for mosquitoes. Drain water from containers regularly. Please visit the Grafton Board of Health website for more information, helpful tips, and information on the services the Central Mass Mosquito Control Project offers.
- For ticks, use DEET or another effective repellent. Do a tick check on each person in your family who has been outside, especially the hard to see areas (e.g., hairline, scalp, armpits). If you have pets, check them for ticks after each time they have been outdoors.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

The building department has been issuing building, electric, mechanical, gas and plumbing permits.

Planning

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board and Affordable Housing Trust. Staff attended a meeting with representatives of 11 Wheeler Road Subdivision regarding final plan amendments prior to Planning Board Endorsement. Staff also discussed remaining work to be completed for a Determination of Completeness Application with representatives of Highpoint Estates.

Staff is also coordinating with Clerk's office staff regarding the 2020 Census data release and met with representatives of the 244 Worcester Street 43D application. Staff submitted "Request for New Units" applications to the Department of Housing and Community Development on behalf of the Zoning Board of Appeals in order to add recently completed projects to the Subsidized Housing Inventory, as well as other long range planning activities.

Staff is beginning review of potential to use 2022 MassTrails Grant Round for additional study and design related to the conceptual Blackstone River bikeway and potential connections to Northbridge and Sutton. Applications are due Feb 1, 2022.

Conservation

- Issued documents from Commission's 10/19 meeting
- Prepared for and attended Commission's 11/2 meeting
- Reviewed applications filed for Commission's 11/16 meeting
- Updated templates and workflows in Viewpoint
- Worked on current Green Communities grant projects & Annual Report
- Conducted site inspections
- Fielded inquiries from residents and applicants

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Have you heard of the Amazing Turkey Challenge? There are still a few spots available for the event on November 13. Drive around town to complete challenges and reveal clues to determine which turkey flew the coop to DisneyWorld! Pre-registration required [HERE](#)

Businesses who would like to participate in Grafton Celebrates the Holidays this year can view sponsorship options or sign up to be a Frosty Stop with submissions due by November 12. Please view the brochure [HERE](#). Advertising options in the event brochure are also available, please inquire with the department.

Those interested in being a vendor for the craft fair during Grafton Celebrates the Holidays on December 5 may submit an application by Nov. 15 [HERE](#).

We have two new offerings with Katie and Evan from our Summer Days Program: Fun Days and Gym Nights! Fun Days for ages 7-10 offers your favorite camp games and Gym Nights for ages 10-13 includes dodgeball, ultimate gladiator, and more. Upcoming dates include Nov. 19, 20, and 24.

And don't forget to take a look at our fall/winter brochure with upcoming offerings [HERE](#) for youth afterschool, weekend and vacation week programs, and all your favorite events!

Please contact the department with any questions at recreation@grafton-ma.gov or 508-839-5335 x1156, visit our website at GraftonRec.com, and follow us on Facebook (@GraftonRecDept) for the latest updates.

Council on Aging

Processed and turned in to the Assessor's office all tax work-off time sheets and certificates of completion of hours for work-off participants. There was a total of 14 participants who worked a total of 1,304.75 hours for an amount of \$17,553.41. The

October Worcester Regional Transit report was completed and emailed to the WRTA. For October 2021 the Senior Center provided 467 rides; compared to 190 rides for October 2020. Outreach is busy submitting fuel assistance applications for seniors. Wellness checks, support, advocacy, and guidance was provided to seniors daily.

Library

6,374 physical items and 30,620 digital items circulated in October – we were closed to the public for a third of the month. Visitor stats are still being compiled.

Library Director Beth Gallaway opened the Library for restroom access and Halloween goodies on Sunday October 31 from 4-8 pm, after distributing donated bags of candy on South Street in the afternoon – we had enough to give every participating household 2 small or 1 large bag of treats, thank you to everyone who donated! The Library participated in the Teal Pumpkin Project again and only gave out non-allergen treats.

Beth submitted a press release of Library updates to media outlets, completed an ad for the GHS fall play, attended the Department Heads meeting, completed a Passport Acceptance Facility recertification training, and facilitated the hybrid Building Committee meeting; a tour of the building followed. She also provided desk coverage for Children's, Teen, Borrower and Reference services, worked on additional procurement items, finished an information request for the Salary and Compensation survey, and began tracking items for the FY23 budget. She signed off on another year of Freegal, a free-to-the-public music database for streaming music (up to 3 hours a day) and downloading MP3s to keep (up to 3 a week); check it out at <https://grafton.freegalmusic.com/home>.

Meeting Room Reservations debuted, and Beth spent a lot of time connecting with requestors to explain the policies, get more information, and approve or deny requests. The public can request an available room at any service desk, or request in advance at <https://graftonlibrary.org/reserve/meeting>. Please read the policy before making the request. Two meeting rooms remain out of order for storage while we await final shipments of shelving. The 10-seat conference room has been reserved for writers participating in NaNoWriMo – come write in community instead of solitude!

Landscaping and punch list work continued, with plumbing, signage and other contractors on site. Beth scheduled annual gutter cleaning, met with Ransford Pest control for their monthly review, called Worcester Elevator when the lift put itself out of service again, and continued to troubleshoot phone and IT and fax issues. Monday evening had the Director climbing on the roof with a Building Committee member in an attempt to close the open attic hatch over the historic building. It's unclear why the hatch was open, but the door's hinge/latch may be damaged, and she had to call on Andy Deschenes to come and help, which he kindly did.

A ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony is being planned for December. The Library will be open during Grafton Celebrates the holidays from 12-4pm.

The Friends were busy sorting through donations for the inaugural Book Sale in the new location, taking place in the Community Room Saturday November 6 from 10am-3pm at the Library at 35 Grafton Common. The Bread Guy will also be on site to do a pop-up fundraiser. As a reminder, masks are required in municipal buildings, and food should be consumed on the outside patios, due to the ongoing pandemic.

Borrower Services staff covered their two service points, helped patrons find material, checked material in and out, answered questions, etc. They continue troubleshooting the AMH, which has some quirks, and are working closing with IT on patron and staff computing and printing issues. Allie worked on the November newsletter, Readers Advisory material and continues to be our in-house tech support; Sandhya continued updating the museum pass program as needed and took responsibility for updating Library flyers and handouts and handled requests for materials from outside of the local library network. Jane and Ranjita managed the *New York Times* Bestseller list and made purchase recommendations for audiobooks and adult fiction & nonfiction. Ranjita completed the monthly AED checks, and Susan supervised staff projects, organized Home Delivery, compiled October statistics, purchased supplies, trained volunteers, trained new staff members on Evergreen (our circulation software), and prepared the monthly Crescent Manor BookWagon.

Heidi answered various reference questions regarding collections, meeting rooms, and donations. She created new library accounts and updated existing ones. She managed details to do with the Senior Book Club. She managed requests for things to be put on our bulletin boards, planned upcoming programs, worked on the Reference monthly report and helped train the temporary Reference Assistant. Welcome Kate, who will be covered on Wednesday and Thursday evenings and every other Friday/Saturday at the information desk.

Children's Services welcomed Miss Stacie, our newest Library Associate! In addition to regular circulation and shelving duties, Marilyn coordinated with volunteers and began to plan for a group training session, Jen ran the Library Babies program with a PowerPoint that included early literacy tips and song lyrics, updated EventKeeper and social media, followed up with participants of the Teddy Bear Sleepover and printed souvenir photos. Cyndi performed notary duties, helped cover desks for staff meal breaks, compiled staff extensions and created a document to share with each department. Kristin continued to reach out to the schools and met with Doreen Parker.

Sarah ran Toddler Time and Preschool, planned and ran three sessions of preschool outreach for North Grafton Elementary School, trained Stacie, coordinated with Beth and Allison regarding the upcoming Winter Reading Program, and provided desk coverage in Reference and Teen Services. The PowerPoints are available online at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDztdT4ZwbJPXB5K1N0GbFg>

Teen Services was hopping all week! We have 20-30 students after school between 2-4 pm: studying, listening to music, playing on computers, socializing, reading. We are conducting an in-house review of our Unattended Child policy, which states children from 0-7 must have a parent in vicinity and 8-12 must have a parent or guardian over age 14 on site; children ages 13 and up may be at the Library unattended. Many children in grades 4-6 are walking to the Library after school unattended. Many teens are coming in unmasked, and since we have run out of masks to give away, will be turning away those who come without masks. Beth and other staff addressed these and other behavioral issues as they came up.

A Reminder: the Library will be CLOSED in observation of Veteran's Day on Thursday November 11; materials can be returned 24/7 but no items are due. Thank you to all who served!

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

We recorded 2 Bus Stop Weather segments, hosted by Freshman Sophie Kling. The first use of the OWL recording device was performed by the Community Preservation Committee in Room F on Thursday night.

GCTV Staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV Gov. events whether LIVE or on Zoom, and all special events or projects for the TA's office.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

November 9, 2021 (Business Meeting)

November 16, 2021 (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

November 17, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.